

SAFETY ALERT



AFZF-GA-SAFE

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
1001 761ST TANK BATTALION AVENUE
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5000



6 May 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Serious Motorcycle Accident - Safety Alert 03-03

1. While walking across a street shortly after midnight on Sunday (27 April) in a residential neighborhood, a III Corps soldier was struck by a motorcycle. The motorcycle operator was from the same unit and had a passenger. Both soldiers had attended a party with other soldiers from the same battalion. The impact between the motorcycle and the pedestrian soldier was so severe that his leg was torn off below the knee. The motorcycle operator lost control of the bike, which fell and skidded along the road. The motorcycle operator fractured one of his legs and the civilian passenger was also injured. The motorcycle operator was reported to have consumed alcoholic beverages prior to the incident. While not all the facts and circumstances are known, we can use this case to address some lessons learned in a general sense.
2. Historical accident statistics gleaned from POV accident investigations, which include motorcycle accidents, reflect that the most frequently cited factors are alcohol, excessive speed, fatigue, and recklessness. Additionally, the most common factors regarding accident severity are failure to wear seat belts and not wearing protective motorcycle safety gear. Knowing this, leaders must make every effort to ensure that their soldiers understand the potentially lethality of these POV accident factors. Your units' Summer Safety Campaigns should include programs that effectively address preventive measures keyed specifically to drinking and driving, speeding, being fatigued, recklessness, failure to wear seat belts and motorcycle safety gear.
3. The incident discussed above reinforces the fact that motor vehicle operators and pedestrians both have responsibilities to keep themselves and others out of harm's way. Luckily, this accident did not result in a more serious injury, or a fatality.
4. Safe POV operations must be second nature to our soldiers. Commanders and leaders need to stay engaged and should not be satisfied until their soldiers have a deep appreciation of the potential consequences related to the accident factors discussed above. Soldiers must be well informed concerning POV safety standards and must have the tools to identify accident-producing factors, and they must employ measures that prevent accidents.

ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Thomas F. Metz'.

THOMAS F. METZ
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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